



McGREGOR W. SCOTT

*United States Attorney
Eastern District of California*

NEWS RELEASE

Sacramento
501 I Street, Suite 10-100
Sacramento, CA 95814
Tel 916/554-2700
TTY 916/554-2877

Fresno
2500 Tulare St., Suite 4401
Fresno, CA 93721
Tel (559) 497-4000
TTY (559) 497-4500

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Contact: Rosemary Shaul (916) 554-2802

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CONSPIRATOR IN SACRAMENTO I.D. THEFT RING GETS FEDERAL PRISON SENTENCE FOR FELONY BANK FRAUD AND POSSESSION OF STOLEN U.S. MAIL

SACRAMENTO--United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that MICHELLE T. RODRIGUEZ, 27, of Sacramento, was sentenced today by United States District Judge Frank C. Damrell, Jr. to 27 months in prison for conspiracy to commit bank fraud and possession of stolen United States mail. RODRIGUEZ had pled guilty on September 24, 2007 before Judge Damrell.

This case is the product of a combined investigation by the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department, the Sacramento Police Department, the United States Postal Inspection Service, and other law enforcement agencies in the greater Sacramento metropolitan area.

In this case, the "Sacramento Citizens' Crime Alert Rewards Program" provided assistance to law enforcement leading to the capture of the conspirators and seizure of evidence. The Crime Alert Program is dedicated to helping the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department and the Sacramento City Police Department apprehend the most wanted suspects in the City of Sacramento and its surrounding areas. Under the Crime Alert Program, citizens can receive a cash reward of up to \$1000 for information leading to the arrest of a suspect or information that solves an unsolved crime.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Michelle Rodriguez (no relation), who prosecuted the case, RODRIGUEZ and several named and unnamed conspirators, executed a scheme to manufacture checks with account numbers of others. RODRIGUEZ is alleged to have conspired with CURTIS MARTINEZ, 35, of Carmichael, to steal identification and account number information from the United States mail and elsewhere to create the fraudulent checks. The defendants then created numerous phoney driver's licenses for fraudulent use and possessed and used stolen identity information to cash the fraudulent checks.

In February 2007, law enforcement received tips in response to a Crime Alert Bulletin for MARTINEZ' whereabouts. On February 7, 2007, law enforcement arranged to have MARTINEZ go to a motel in Sacramento. MARTINEZ drove to the motel with RODRIGUEZ but fled as soon as he saw law enforcement. After MARTINEZ took law enforcement on a high speed chase through Sacramento city streets, MARTINEZ and RODRIGUEZ were stopped and detained. In the vehicle, law enforcement found over 25 manufactured checks bearing the names of several different individuals, social security

cards and numbers of others, ownership documents belonging to others, and numerous store receipts for fraudulent transactions. Over 50 different victims have been identified in this case.

In addition to being sentenced to 27 months imprisonment, RODRIGUEZ was ordered to serve a three year term of supervised release and to pay a \$200 special assessment. A further hearing is scheduled on January 28, 2008 for determination of restitution.

The case against MARTINEZ is presently pending before Judge Damrell. MARTINEZ' case is scheduled for a status hearing on November 26, 2007. The charges against MARTINEZ are only allegations and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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